PATRIOTIC COMPETITION

AGAINST SELF-INTERESTED

COMBINATION,

RECOMMENDED;

BY A UNION

BETWEEN THE NOBILITY, THE LANDED, AND INDEPENDENT, INTEREST, THE CLERGY, AND CONSUMER:

WITH A VIEW OF

Reducing Commodities

FROM THEIR *MONEY*, OR MARKET, PRICE, TO THEIR *REAL*, OR LABOUR, PRICE.

" Every man is rich or poor, according to the degree in which he " can afford to enjoy the neceſſaries, conveniences, and amuſements " of human life."—A. SMITH's *Wealth of Nations.*

" Great profits are always higheſt in the countries which are going " faſteſt to ruin."—A. SMITH's *Wealth of Nations.*

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CANDOUR is requeſted to correct ſuch errors as haſte, and the Author's abſence from town, when this pamphlet was printed off, may have occaſioned.

S. GOSNELL, Printer,
Little Queen Street, Holborn.

PATRIOTIC COMPETITION,

&c.

WHAT may not admit a cure, may admit of alleviation! To promote which, is the object of the following ſheets. At this all-intereſting criſis, I am induced to ſtep forward, and, through the medium of the preſs, ſubmit to public conſideration ſome opinions reſpecting the preſent exorbitant price of proviſions; the cauſes, which have gradually and immediately produced theſe lamentable effects; and the remedies, which, ſafely and beneficially, can be applied by legal interference, and individual exertions. Though, after all our efforts, it is conceived, much patience *muſt* be exerciſed, and many privations endured, not only by the lower and middling claſſes, in Great

Britain and Ireland, but by all ranks (noble as well as plebeian) who ſubſiſt by what is uſually denominated, a fixed income. Suppoſe we calculate the number at eight millions! Theſe ſentiments, ſuch as they are, ſhall be delivered without ſcruple, and without diſguiſe; I hope they will not be tinctured by prejudice; I am ſure they will be devoid of any thing more than that general intereſt which ought to prevail in the breaſt of every member of the community. The ſubjects to be diſcuſſed are not of a party nature; if they were, party might diſcuſs them; I would not.

To me, the principal evils ſeem various, and complicated; ſome, of a temporary, ſome of a permanent, nature; ſome, admitting partial remedies; ſome, chronic and incurable.

1ſt—(It is to be feared permanent evils) our enormous debts and taxes (preſſing on the tranquillity of every mind, and, generally ſpeaking, the income of every individual), contracted in the preſent and former wars, and now incorporated, as

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it were, with our very exiſtence, ſupporting, debauching, and deluding millions; winding and working through a thouſand and a thouſand corrupt and infectious channels, finally, perhaps, to diſembogue themſelves in the gulf of perdition; the waſte, inſeparable from all naval and military operations; together with the extenſive dealings of Government contractors; and the preſent ſtate of the continent*.

2dly, In few words; the *manœuvres of trade*, wholeſale and retail (the former in particular), of engroſſers, ſpeculators, foreſtallers, farmers, and regraters, now reduced as much to a ſyſtem, as General Dundaſs's eighteen manœuvres, lately practiſed at Swinley Camp. The groſs abuſes connected with banking, and the commercial ſyſtem; the prevalency of theſe intereſts over the landed intereſt, and

* Probably, the great influx of riches from the Eaſt and Weſt Indies has contributed to raiſe the *money* prices of proviſions—ſo has the general careleſſneſs of heads of families, who abandon all management to ſervants.

the

the too intimate connexion between the former and Government, which has long ſubſiſted, and ſtill continues to ſubſiſt.

3dly, *Overtrading*; large capitals, and *larger* credits, artfully and conſtantly employed to raiſe every article of conſumption above its *natural* price; the impudent abuſes of a free trade, extended diſcount, and infamous bills of accommodation; together with an increaſed capital, intruded into the corn trade; and, generally ſpeaking, the overgrown and unconſcionable *profits of ſtock*, often unconnected, and often incompatible, with the general intereſts of ſociety.

4thly, The hand of Heaven *, which, lately, hath curtailed us of our accuſtomed abun-

* Although the manœuvres of the great farmers and corn-dealers are ſuppoſed conſiderably to have enhanced the *money* price of wheat, yet a ſcarcity of *that* commodity is by no means deemed fictitious; nor is it imagined the late crops are ſufficiently abundant to afford a *full* ſupply, 'till the enſuing harveſt commences; conſe-

abundance, ultimately, no doubt, for good purpoſes. To which, perhaps, we muſt add an increaſed population.

Under

conſequently, as far as dearneſs contracts conſumption, and preſerves the regular and politic balance between the ſtock in hand (including what, reaſonably, may be expected from importation) and the current expenditure, dearneſs, of *bread*, is a diſguiſed benefit; yet ſo diſguiſed, indeed, it muſt be confeſſed, as not always, willingly, to be recogniſed even by an intimate acquaintance; while ſcarcity *ſhall be* one of the evils, ſurely a *general* encouragement of the uſe of rice, potatoes, herrings, ſalted fiſh, beef, pork, &c. *muſt* be well calculated to relieve the demand for bread-corn, and, at the ſame time, the diſtreſſes of the poor—and, the *cheaper* they are to be procured, the more likely are they, of courſe, to be *generally* ſubſtituted *by* the poor, in lieu of a portion of the bread, now ſo uniformly in uſe. This, naturally, conducts us to one of the *inferior* cauſes of deficiency, which, to my knowledge, has not been adverted to. In latter years, in proportion as bacon, butcher's meat, cheeſe, and butter, from their dearneſs, have ceaſed to be conſumed by the poor, *bread* has been, almoſt, the univerſal ſubſtitute—where, formerly, a family ate ſix pounds of meat, &c. *one*, lately, has ſufficed; an addition of *ten* pounds of *bread*, has ill ſupplied the

vacuum

Under the afflicting preſſure of our national debt and taxes (which, in their operation, inevitably *muſt* advance the *money price*, on the conſumer), not even Mr. Roſe's calculations can adminiſter much hope, or much conſolation; patience under our ſeveral ſufferings muſt be reſorted to, or fatal convulſions, in a fatal ſtruggle *, which could not extricate us.

The rocks are high above the water; and, if the period is not already paſt, and they *do* ſerve to deter future Miniſters of this country, or of other ſtates, from running on, with a preſs of ſail, to deſtruction, ſome good may be derived from much evil. The facility of borrowing and burthening poſ-

vacuum—yet, if we calculate the conſumers of the increaſed quantity of *bread* at four millions, and at an additional pound a week, for each perſon, we muſt add, *two hundred and eight millions of pounds*, to our former annual conſumption!

* Some ſchemes, it is ſaid, have been propoſed to pay off a great part of our debt, by the ſacrifice of *capital*; that we might be enabled to run in debt again!

terity, is the facility of ruin, but not always a proof of the *real* wealth or proſperity of a nation, even at the moment the largeſt ſums are raiſed.

The principal cauſes, then, as they preſent themſelves to my view, may be reſolved into, national debt and taxes; war; the abuſe of the *paper ſyſtem**; the manœuvres of

* Reſpectable and reſpected as are the memory and exertions of Dr. Smith, it is feared that ingenious theory has long been foiled by more ingenious practice. The Doctor conceives, if a larger quantity of paper is iſſued than may be ſufficient to give circulation to, and augment, the produce of the land and labour of the country, that the ſurplus will immediately return to thoſe who iſſue it, to be paid in gold, out of the fund preſerved for occaſional demands. Yet the arts uſed in paper tranſactions would fill many volumes; the hiſtory of Britiſh *moonſhine*, would be ſcarcely leſs curious than that of the moon itſelf. The *proper* uſe of paper is ſo far to ſupply the deficiency of gold as to enable the merchant, farmer, dealer, &c. to employ the money he would *otherwiſe* be obliged to keep by him (to *anſwer* the *real* calls connected with his dealings), but, by no means, ſhould be equal to repreſent the amount of his whole ſtock; and

of trade; and an inſufficient ſupply of grain.

The

A. Smith deems it injurious to the banker to iſſue more than ſufficient paper to anſwer ſuch *real* calls.—Yet, ſurely, the invariable operation of taxes, combined with ſucceſsful manœuvres, to advance *money* prices (on a ſuppoſition that *gold* goes abroad to purchaſe commodities, where *paper* will not paſs), will not only encourage, but almoſt enforce an increaſed iſſue; for, ſuppoſing even the quantity of gold to remain the ſame, it is evident that if a *two*-pound note is requiſite, to-day, to repreſent what, yeſterday, a *one*-pound note would purchaſe, the quantity of paper *muſt* increaſe, in proportion. Thus, by a conſtant action, and re-action, between the trading and the banking intereſt, *money prices* augment and ſupport paper, and paper augments and ſupports MONEY PRICES. The *abuſe*, has eaſily grown out of the *uſe*, of paper; the *uſe* was, to facilitate the exchange of goods, with a fair profit on them, for the benefit of the dealers, and accommodation of the conſumers; but the *abuſe* of paper, inſtead of promoting a fair circulation of goods, often enables great dealers to keep them in ſtore, until they can be circulated, on their own terms. "Bleſt paper credit" accommodates them, in the mean time!—Thus, it is imagined, what cannot go abroad, does *not* run over the

channel

The principal remedies ſeem of a twofold nature; ſuch as the Legiſlature may enforce; and ſuch as individuals, as the law now exiſts, by their exertions, might reſort to.

At preſent, the reader's attention is requeſted more particularly to the latter, on a ſuppoſition, that Parliament and Adminiſtration will ſoon be actively employed in the formation of ſuch laws and regulations as may be deemed expedient; yet, perhaps, hereafter, a few hints may be offered, reſpecting ſuch laws and regulations.

But, before we proceed, I will endeavour to eſtabliſh ſome principles which appear to be ſound, and calculated to ſerve as a kind of preface to our preſent ſcheme, and which, if now peruſed, and always preſerved in remembrance, may act as

channel of circulation; but that artificial mounds have been raiſed to keep it in; paper, now, is piled on paper; and, if *money* prices are permitted to advance, ſo muſt it be, 'till, to our paper mountains,

"Offa will be a wart."

guides to conduct us to the camp of *the allies*, our enemies, and may diſcover the weak and aſſailable parts of their intrenchments. I have reconnoitred them, and think they are far from being impregnable; I conceive their reſources might be cut off, and their poſition turned.

To proceed: Political economy ought to preſerve two grand objects always in view: the firſt ſhould be, to furniſh the means of a liberal and certain ſupply to a people, by aid of their own induſtry and exertions.

The ſecond, to render that induſtry, and thoſe exertions ſubſervient to purpoſes *really* national, particularly, as far as may relate to a revenue neceſſary to be employed for the protection of a ſtate*.

Money,

* In raiſing this revenue, as well as in a variety of commercial regulations, it is conceived, that, in Great Britain, ſometimes directly, ſometimes indirectly, the intereſts of the landholder have been repeatedly ſacrificed to the monied and commercial intereſt, but that, by wholeſome laws, and by meeting trade, commerce, and

Money, is only a medium of commerce; the *real* riches of a country are conſtituted by the land and labour of that country. The capital employed to render the land productive, and the labour active, is uſually denominated *ſtock*, by writers on political economy. There are *natural* and juſt, as well as *artificial* and unjuſt prices, but which prices, when natural and juſt, ſhould reſolve themſelves into the rent of land, the wages of labour, and the fair profits of ſtock. When reaſonable allowances have been made for theſe (according to exiſting circumſtances), all further enhancements may be ſtyled the *artificial* price, which ſhould be viewed by the landed intereſt, and conſumer, with a ſuſpicious, and watched with a never-ſleeping, eye.

If it is an eſtabliſhed truth among trading people (as it is), that when a market is overſtocked, the *effectual* demand will be *leſs* than the ſupply; ſo, by a parity of rea-

and banking, openly in the field, and aſſailing them with their own weapons, they may be reſtrained within *ſome* bounds.

ſoning, they too well know, that a deficiency, true or imaginary, will raiſe the *market* price, on the conſumer. If it is found more can be gained by a narrow, than an extenſive, ſupply, great dealers will reſort to, and practiſe, that method, if not, abſolutely, by a general and direct combination, yet, virtually, by a tacit one. They know, too, that the retail dealers will, and often muſt, regulate their prices accordingly *.

Open, fair, and *real* competition has a direct and uncontrollable tendency to leſſen

* We often hear it ſaid, that people who keep proviſions from the market, with a view of enhancing the price, deſerve to be hanged; but, perhaps, judicious laws, and "patriotic *competition*," will effect more than a cargo of ropes. In the commercial and trading ſyſtem, it is well known that *profit* is the *Alpha* and *Omega* too; and that it regulates and creates *ſupply*, and not the love of our fellow-creatures. Were poiſoning and aſſaſſination to become legal and faſhionable in England, *ſtilettoes* would be imported from Italy, and deleterious herbs from every quarter of the globe, or fabricated and cultivated in Great Britain; and ſold with as much compoſure, as ſwords, piſtols, powder, cannon, and cannon-ſhot!

prices,

prices, make them gravitate to their proper centre, and preſerve the *profits of ſtock* within their due limits.

The greater and more preſſing the *effectual* demand in the market (uſing market as a general term), the greater will be the ſum required of the purchaſer, by the vender; which purchaſer, conſequently, in proportion to his immediate wants, and the contracted ſtate of the market, is more or leſs at the mercy of the vender, whoſe conſtant object is to ſell, not for the *leaſt* he can afford, but the *moſt* he can procure; a maxim, which he early imbibes, and invariably puts in practice, with unremitting and unrelenting ſeverity; uninfluenced by humanity, popularity, national conſiderations, or any thing but the certainty of an immediate, or the hopes of a diſtant, profit.

The intereſts, then, of the vender and conſumer, appear to be obviouſly, and almoſt conſtantly, at variance; and, while the trader is actuated by theſe views, which ever have, and ever will influence him, muſt always remain at variance.

When

When the *nominal*, or *money* price of commodities, ſo far exceeds the *real*, or *labour* price, that the ſame quantity of labour will not purchaſe the ſame commodities as at any other given period, living may be ſaid to be *dearer*; as that muſt be *dear* which much labour is requiſite to procure, and that *cheap* which *little* labour can obtain: conſequently, in proportion as the *market* price advances faſter than the *real* price, and the wages of labour, the comforts of life muſt recede from the labourer and conſumer; unleſs they are dealers, or have ſome mode of increaſing their income in arithmetical proportion. By which it will appear, that the deplorable ſtate of the labourer, and conſumer in general, is now conſiderably influenced, and is daily increaſing, by the increaſing *money* price (or more ſtrictly ſpeaking, *paper* price) of commodities, which price has augmented with that circulating medium (the locuſt of the land), not only growing with its growth, but ſtrengthening with its weakneſs. Yet nobody will deny, that the labourer muſt al-

ways

ways be enabled to live by his exertions, and bring up a family; or that the race muſt dwindle and expire, unleſs pariſh relief, penury, abject dependence, and conſtant privation, ſhall remain his hard and impolitic lot; a lot, which never can, and never will, be peaceably borne.

It ſeems, then, not only to be the intereſt of Government in particular, and Parliament, but that of the landholder, the clergy, the conſumer, and people at large, by every legal effort in their power (and that they poſſeſs much power we will endeavour to prove), to reduce and preſerve the profits of ſtock, and of the trader, within moderate bounds, meaning ſomething near the *loweſt price* which *can* be taken, on liberal principles (inſtead of the *higheſt price* which *can* be fraudulently obtained, on trading principles), by well-defined laws, by prudent regulations, and by meeting traders, &c, &c. in the field, and foiling them with their own weapons.

The pernicious and faſhionable doctrine of *the benefit of high prices*, when carried to exceſs, and riſing above the *real*, or *labour*,

price, to be condemned, only requires to be expoſed.—Theory, has long indulged in ſuch ſpeculations; practice, has completely confounded them; and, to endeavour to reduce prices to their *natural* ſtandard, is the main object of theſe few ſheets.

If the landed intereſt is put in a ſtate of activity, which may eaſily be effected by aid of well-regulated *county** banks, what

* Although a *county* bank, could not conſiſt of above ſix members, without encroaching on the privileges of the Bank of England, yet, it is ſuppoſed, that, if ſix principal landholders were to unite, they might *call* their bank a *county* one, yet infringe not on that charter; and the notes of ſuch landholders (payable in London, as well as the country) might amount to 120,000*l.* on a ſuppoſition that 15,000*l.* or, at moſt, 20,000*l.* remained ready, in caſh, or *Bank of England* notes, to anſwer occaſional demands. Were not *one* county bank ſufficient, they could eaſily be augmented, to any number. The author has it not in his power to refer to the charter of the Bank of England; and, if he *ſhould* have recommended any proceeding inconſiſtent with that charter, the *county* banks, of courſe, muſt be confined to legal aſſociations of noblemen and gentlemen, ſuch as, now, exiſt, among bankers, in general.

is, now, dormant, will no longer ſlumber and ſleep: paper, will be repreſented by land, and land, will be accommodated by paper, and the conſumer protected by a general and "patriotic competition." The torpid victim, will become the vigorous aſſailant; a juſt and neceſſary war* will commence, on defenſive principles, though, in the conduct of it, for a time at leaſt, offenſive operations muſt be carried on in the enemy's country. But we muſt act on a general plan, and by general concert; partial attempts might only encourage our opponents, and weaken ourſelves: but, if a movement among the landed intereſt became univerſal, complete victory might enſue.

Not to enter too much, here, into detail, I will only propoſe, that noblemen, gentlemen, the clergy, and all perſons of the higher claſſes of ſociety, who have a greater intereſt in the permanent peace, ſecurity, and proſpe-

* It is conceived that the *end* would be juſt, and the *means*, lawful—that we have a right to *provide for our own ſafety*—and that our manifeſto might contain *due and juſtificatory reaſons*.

 rity

rity of the nation, than in banking and the manœuvres of trade, ſhall aſſemble in their reſpective counties, and trace the grand outline of their plan of operations; after which, the general principles may be modified, according to the different circumſtances of cities, towns, or villages. Theſe principles are *competition with the banking and trading intereſt*, by *county* banks, or individual credit, by the aid of which, it is computed almoſt every article of conſumption might be reduced one fourth or fifth, if ſold in moderate quantities in *all* our markets, through Great Britain and Ireland, to the *conſumer*; or in ſhops conveniently eſtabliſhed for the purpoſe, thus counteracting the ſelfiſh, impudent, and groſs conduct, which, at preſent, ſo uniformly prevails *.

When

* Soon after the peace of 1783, the Author was in Artown, in Weſt Meath, in Ireland, where the appearance of 150 troops enabled the country people to combine, and raiſe the price of meat, on the military and inhabitants, from twopence, and twopence halfpenny, to fivepence a pound. The commanding officer

When the *county* meeting takes place, I beg to ſuggeſt, that reſolutions, in ſome degree ſimilar to the following (with ſuch additions, ſubtractions, and modifications, as may be thought prudent), might be entered into—for this is a haſty ſketch, written and ſent to the preſs in a few days; and, in detail, cannot be ſufficiently perfect and comprehenſive. The *principles*, it is to be hoped, are ſound and applicable, and nothing further has been attempted than a brief elucidation and application of them.

If the foundation is good, the ſuperſtructure, hereafter, may be raiſed, decorated, and finiſhed, at leiſure. Capital, engi-

cer employed a ſergeant (once, by trade, a butcher) ſecretly, and at a diſtance, to purchaſe ſome ſheep, kill, bring them to market, and ſell them, at prime coſt. On that day, meat experienced a diminution, in price, of *twopence*, in the pound; on the enſuing market-day, the ſame plan *of competition* was purſued, with the ſame ſucceſs. Afterwards, a compromiſe was made, and meat never roſe to more than *threepence* a pound, which, perhaps, may be computed at twenty per cent. above the *real* price.

neers,

neers, artificers, and labourers, will be eaſily found.

1ſt. *Reſolved*, That the money, *or market price*, of articles commonly uſed for the conſumption and ſuſtenance of ourſelves, and the people at large, ſeems to exceed, in an undue proportion, the *natural*, or *labour*, *price*; and *that*, if to *narrow* competition is the intereſt of the *dealer*, to *widen* competition, and the market, is the intereſt of the conſumer.

2d, That this evil has rapidly increaſed, is ſtill increaſing, and, by every lawful effort, ought to be counteracted and ſuppreſſed, as greatly affecting the peace and intereſts of the country, and the comfort of individuals.

3d, That the abuſes ariſing from banking, and paper tranſactions, are intimately connected with the evils we are deſirous of remedying.

4th, That, however, we have no objection to a due proportion of reſpectable paper currency, equal and applicable to all *fair* tranſactions calculated to promote agriculture,

ture, trade, and commerce, and *really* neceſſary to an augmentation, or circulation, of the annual produce of the land and labour of the nation.

5th, That it will be expedient the landed and independent intereſt ſhould employ a portion, both of their capitals and credit, to enter into a competition with the banking, commercial, and trading intereſt, on a grand ſcale, with a view of reducing the *profits of ſtock*, and paper currency, to a proper ſtandard, and of protecting the conſumer and the people.

6th, That, for theſe purpoſes, a committee ſhall be formed, and ſhall endeavour to draw up a plan for the eſtabliſhment of a *county* bank*, the capital of which ſhall not exceed £. divided into ſix ſhares of £. each; no one perſon to poſſeſs above one ſhare.

7th, That, ſuch bank ſhall be formed on the principle of reducing the *money* price of proviſions, and other articles of general

* A premium might be offered to any perſon who gave in the beſt project for a *county* bank.

conſumption, by enabling the county to purchaſe, by wholeſale and by importation *, ſuch articles as a committee ſhall agree upon, with a view of retailing them to *conſumers*, through the medium of committees of gentlemen, and public ſhops, ſhould it be found expedient to eſtabliſh ſuch committees and ſhops in every city, town, and pariſh of this county.

8th, That per cent., ſuppoſed to be ſufficient to cover all loſſes and expences, ſhall be placed on the different articles purchaſed.

9th, That, if any profits ſhall remain, they ſhall be applied to public purpoſes, connected with the immediate intereſt of the county, or in ſupport of the preſent plan.

10th, That, after the firſt objects of the bank ſhall be accompliſhed, the committee ſhall endeavour to form a plan including the permanent accommodation of the landed intereſt, with a current paper *really* repreſenting land, by which it is conceived *capitals*, now almoſt inactive and unma-

* In the mean time a ſubſcription might be entered into.

nageable,

nageable, may be converted into a circulating medium, for the encouragement of agriculture, on the moſt improved, enlightened, and extenſive ſyſtem.

11th, That, if the ſcheme of a *county* bank ſhall be deemed inexpedient, nevertheleſs, as individuals, we will exert ourſelves, on a ſettled plan, effectually to promote the great work of *competition*, by advancing money from our incomes, or by our credit*, to the end that the conſumer may purchaſe at a cheap price.

12th, That, we do not confine this ſcheme of ſelling cheap to the poor and middling claſſes of people only, but propoſe ſo to extend it, that perſons of a ſuperior condi-

* Were gentlemen to iſſue their bills, payable in three, or ſix, months, ſuch bills might be taken up, and paid by the receipt of the *ready money* trade carried on; they might proceed merely by the aſſiſtance of a good name—with little riſk or inconvenience. The annihilation of *ſmall* ſhopkeepers (who gain 40 or 50 per cent.), and the means of running in debt, of themſelves only, would materially better the condition of the poor.

tion, *conſumers*, ſhall be accommodated, when cattle, meat, flour, &c. ſhall be ſent to market, or expoſed to ſale in the ſhops.

13th, That, indirectly, to cut off the ſupplies and reſources of fraud, overtrading, foreſtallers, and engroſſers, after—we will not accept any country bank-note in payment of our rents, or for the produce of our eſtates, or in change; but that we will take bank-notes, our *own county* notes, or the notes of any *other* county bank, eſtabliſhed on the landed intereſt †.

† This is not meant to extend to ſuch banks as thoſe at Briſtol, and other large trading cities, on condition that the capitals ſhall be limited by act of Parliament—but the refuſal propoſed would completely ruin, as it is intended it ſhould, many country banks. If the meaſure, though effectual, ſhould be thought too ſtrong, we muſt truſt to competition and ſuperior credit, to drive in the country notes, to which 100 millions of *Wood's halfpence* would be a bleſſing. I think we may ſay to country notes (and, perhaps, to many, iſſued in the metropolis, alſo), what an officer once ſaid to his men, previous to an engagement:—"There are our enemies; let us kill them, or by "Heaven, they will ſoon kill us."

14th, That, by combination, combination muſt be, and can be, materially counteracted; and that, if banking and trade are free to bankers and regular traders, as they are ſtyled, on *their* principles, they are free to us, on *ours*.

15th, That, a petition to Parliament be drawn up, praying that ſuch laws may be paſſed as are beſt calculated to eſtabliſh, on liberal principles, in the markets, *complete freedom of purchaſe to the conſumer*; to effect which we conceive that laws to define and ſuppreſs engroſſing, foreſtalling, and regrating, may be judiciouſly enacted.

16th, That, with unremitting perſeverance and attention, we will endeavour to enforce a due, liberal, and politic execution of thoſe laws, and all ſuch as Parliament ſhall enact, not to the ruin of fair, but to the annihilation of unfair, trading.

17th, That, it will be expedient to eſtabliſh a correſpondence with the different counties, eſpecially thoſe adjoining, or connected by water carriage, to the end that our proceedings may be as uniform

as circumſtances will admit, and that every poſſible aſſiſtance may be given and received.

18th, That, probably, the maritime counties might furniſh the inland with very large quantities of fiſh, freſh and ſalted, and that it may be expedient to encourage their committees to fit out veſſels accordingly.

19th, That, a regular account ſhall be kept of all tranſactions, and that, when prices are fixed on different articles, to be ſold for *ready money*, on the aforementioned plan, handbills ſhall be printed, and the prices alſo notified in the county papers.

20th, That, the committee ſhall conſider whether it may not be expedient to erect *county* ovens; alſo mills, where, one or two days in the week, ſuch corn as is brought by, or for, the *conſumer*, ſhall be ground; likewiſe wheat intended to be converted into flour, and ſold, according to the preſent plan?

21ſt, Alſo, whether county granaries ſhall not be formed, in convenient ſituations?

22d,

22d, That, *depots* of various articles of conſumption ſhall be eſtabliſhed, from which, by application from the different town and pariſh committees, ſuch committees, on regular days, may be ſupplied, on payment in money, bank, or *county* notes.

23d, That, we will endeavour ſo to act as not to encroach on, but rather to blend our intereſts with thoſe of Government, and the Bank of England, and the moſt reſpectable commercial intereſts of the empire*.

24th, That, were we to pay our labourers in *county* notes, agriculture might be materially promoted; or, if in *kind*†, when it

* Suppoſe an act were procured to enable *county* banks to iſſue notes of 9s. 10s. 6d. and 12s. they would nearly repreſent a week's labour.

† Were pariſh relief (in general) to be diſtributed in *kind*, rather than in *money*, under the ſuperintendence of the officers, and a *committee of gentlemen* (by whoſe approbation purchaſes might be made, by wholeſale), a great ſum could be ſaved, as well as a great conſumption of *bread*—Tea, ſugar, rice, peaſe, red

it can be done, a great advantage would accrue to the labourer, who might thus procure, for one ſhilling, what he could not buy for one ſhilling and ſixpence.

25th, That, though long leaſes have been conſidered, and perhaps juſtly, to the advantage, in many inſtances, of the landlord, as well as tenant, a choſen committee, with aſſiduity and circumſpection, ſhall compare the practice of former days, with the theory and practice of the preſent; and, as *corn rents* * vary leſs than

red herrings, bacon, cheeſe, butter, ſalted pork, and cod, &c. might be delivered. Of ſome of theſe, excellent ſoup may be made by the poor, in their cottages, and printed directions for that purpoſe given to them.

* Were the adoption of *corn rents* general, an intereſt would be created in the breaſt of the farmer, to ſell at a moderate price, which, in ſome degree, would preſerve the balance between real, and *money*, prices. On a farm now rated at 600*l.* a year, ſuppoſe a corn rent, one third of which ſhould, abſolutely, be paid in *kind*, the remainder, according to the average price in the neareſt, or in the London, market; thus, the landlord (reſiding on his own eſtate) would be provided with a large quantity of wheat, to ſell by buſhels, or to

grind,

than any other, with the variation of the times, the ſaid committee ſhall endeavour to digeſt a plan, not only for the granting of all future leaſes on that ſyſtem, but alſo of paying workmen on the ſame principle—that is, on the principle of *corn wages*.

26th, That, a petition be preſented to Parliament, to induce them to enter ſpeedily into the conſideration of a plan for the further cultivation of waſte-lands.

27th, That, an application be made to Government, and the Eaſt India Company, to patroniſe and ſupport this plan of reducing commodities to their *natural* price, by giving a preference to our committees for the purchaſe of foreign wheat, rice, teas, ſugars, &c. &c. and by aiding us, both

grind, and diſpoſe of in flour, or baked into bread, or to pay his labourers with. For a time, at leaſt, noblemen and gentlemen might partly decline diſpoſing of their cattle to dealers, but have them killed, and ſent to market, or to one of the cheap ſhops. By preſerving a correſpondence with Adminiſtration, the policy of a liberal, or parſimonious ſupply of flour, on this plan, might be readily aſcertained.

by

by their countenance at home, and their agents and conſuls abroad. In return for which, we conceive our proceedings will tend to the ſecurity of Government and the country, and enable us to pay our taxes without drawing from our own incomes or capitals, or the capital ſtock of ſociety, ſuch a portion as would impede exertions beneficial to the nation.

28th, That, although the rent of land has conſiderably advanced, it has been exceeded, in an enormous and diſproportionate degree, by *the profits of ſtock*, and the banking and monied intereſt; but, that the execution of the propoſed plans, when modified by wiſdom, liberality, and circumſpection, will have a conſiderable tendency towards equalizing them, as well as to render the rent of land more adequate, and the preſent wages of labour more competent to maintain the labourer and his family *.

29th,

* It is ſcarcely requiſite to prove, that the wages of labour do not conſiſt in nine, ten, or twelve ſhillings a week, but in the exchangeable value, the quality, and

29th, That, as nonconſumption leſſens demand, and a frugal demand diminiſhes prices, as far as circumſtances may admit, we will contract our conſumption in ſuch articles as are dear and ſcarce (particularly bread corn), and adopt ſuch ſubſtitutes as may be cheaply and eaſily procured; and that we will obſerve, and enforce, the ſtricteſt economy in our families.

30th, That, a preſident,—vice-preſidents, a ſolicitor, and clerks, ſhall be appointed.

31ſt, That, our bailiffs and teams ſhall be employed, *gratis*, when they can be ſpared, to promote the plans in agitation.

32d, That, it will be expedient to call the attention of Parliament, not only to the promotion of the fiſheries on our coaſt, but to the ſuppreſſion of all arts and manœuvres calculated to prevent *large* ſupplies

and quantity, of the neceſſaries of life, or other conſumable goods, which can be commanded, and procured, by thoſe ſhillings: therefore, to obviate the *neceſſity* of advancing the *wages of labour*, the policy of reducing *money* prices ſeems apparent.

coming to a *fair* market, for the benefit of the *conſumer* *.

33d, That, out of the *grand county* committee, ſub-committees ſhall be frequently and judiciouſly formed, for the conſideration of any particular point, and report their proceedings and opinions to the *grand* committee.

34th, That, on the aforementioned principles, we recommend the formation of committees, alſo, in every city, town, and pariſh, of this county, and ſolicit a correſpondence between ſuch committees and the *grand* committee, to which an abſtract of their proceedings may be given in every month, and from which *grand* committee every poſſible aid ſhall be conſtantly given.

35th, That, all propoſals, tending to promote, extend, and render perfect, the

* The manœuvres of the fiſhing-trade, and fiſh-market, have been notorious for many years. The inadequacy of the exiſting laws, is equally ſo.

ſcheme in agitation, ſhall be ſent, in writing, to the preſident.

36th, That, juſt in our intentions, open in our actions, ſuperior to all artifice, and employed in a ſcheme of great national importance, when our plans are more regularly digeſted, they ſhall be communicated, by the preſident, to his Majeſty's Miniſters, who ſhall be requeſted to conſider the ſame, and favour us with ſuch remarks, or objections, as they may deem pertinent; which remarks or objections ſhall be duly conſidered, in the general committee, and a correſpondence preſerved with Miniſters*.

* Yet, all undue influence, muſt be carefully watched, and oppoſed. The *real*, permanent, intereſt of the landholder has not always been conſiſtent with the temporary views and accommodation of an adminiſtration, more eſpecially during the exiſtence of war.

POSTSCRIPT.

IT is conceived, that unlimited banking, and a *perfect* liberty of trade, exalted into a ſtate maxim, "by the ſneaking arts of underling tradeſmen," will be found, like *perfect* liberty of action, ſpeech, or of the preſs, inconſiſtent with the ſecurity and happineſs of the nation, and capable of being made ſubject to wholeſome and politic reſtraints. It is to be hoped, that the neceſſity of raiſing thirty millions, even in peace, and weighty perſonal intereſts, may not poſtpone the eſtabliſhment of ſuch reſtraints, "even until the eleventh hour"—or 'till complete licentiouſneſs or complete deſpotiſm ſhall prevail. With a view of reducing *money* prices, the Author has recommended a general competition, and he will venture to add, he imagines, alſo, that conſiderable advantages might reſult, to the *conſumer*,

BY—funding Exchequer bills; by curtailing unfair diſcounts, at the Bank; by ſuppreſſing bills of accommodation; by limiting the paper tranſactions of all merchants, wholeſale dealers, and bankers (compelling them to take out a licence to trade to a given amount),

amount*), and, generally ſpeaking, by every poſſible means, to diminiſh the immenſe quantity of paper currency, reducing it to what may be *requiſite* to fill the *natural* channel of circulation, after making a liberal allowance for foreign tranſactions, and the component prices of all articles, produced or circulated.

BY—defining, and annihilating, foreſtalling, &c. *effectually* ſecuring that *great* object a *free market to the conſumer*—as well as a free trade, to the dealer—by compelling the ſale of corn, in bulk, and in the open market; and by more juſt, and regular returns, of ſales—and by an improved mode of fixing the aſſize of bread.

BY—the cultivation of waſte lands, and the abolition of tithes—by bounties on importation of rice, corn, &c. and indemnity to the importers, in the event of loſſes to them.

BY—ſevere penalties on defrauders, with falſe weights and meaſures.

* Thus, in two ways, a revenue might ariſe.

1ſt, By enacting, that all merchants, &c. &c. ſhall pay for their licences (always renewable, for an augmented capital, on application).

2dly, By indirectly obliging them ſo far to expoſe their concerns, that all evaſions of the income tax would be rendered more difficult: nay, we might be led to a partial execution of the rejected plan, of the examination of their books, which, now, would be ſanctioned by the popular opinion that ſuch a proceeding would tend to a reduction in the *money* price of proviſions.

BY

BY—taking off the duty on coals, in the port of London; by regulations, in the coal trade; and by a competition to be raiſed, between Government, connected with *county* committees, and the preſent traders, Government providing ſhips for the purpoſe.

BY—judicious laws and regulations; and—by the ſame kind of competition, in the fiſh trade, Government furniſhing veſſels, with a view of converting fiſh into a *common* and cheap food*.

And, generally ſpeaking, by a cloſe and powerful union between Adminiſtration and the county committees, to promote *competition*, on a grand ſcale; the extenſion of our markets; and *complete freedom of purchaſe to the conſumer*.

With a view of aſcertaining our population, and forming ſome idea of our expected crops, not only a return of the number of inhabitants might be obtained, from each pariſh, annually, but, after the ſpring corn was in, returns might be made, ſpecifying the number of acres of land in wheat, barley,

* Might not great part of England be regularly ſupplied with fiſh, by opening, and preſerving, a conſtant communication, with our ſea-ports? Could not little *fiſhing fleets* ſail, to the North Seas, to Torbay, &c. under convoy of very ſmall Government veſſels, which might not only ſuperintend their operations, and prevent unfair dealings, but ſee them ſafe into their deſtined ports, where the *whole* of their cargoes might be brought to an *open* market?—A few half-pay officers might be employed, and thus, that navy, the heroes and ſaviours of their country, in war, would conduce, in no ſmall degree, to our ſubſiſtence, in peace.

&c.

&c. to facilitate which, printed forms could be ſent to the clergyman of every pariſh.

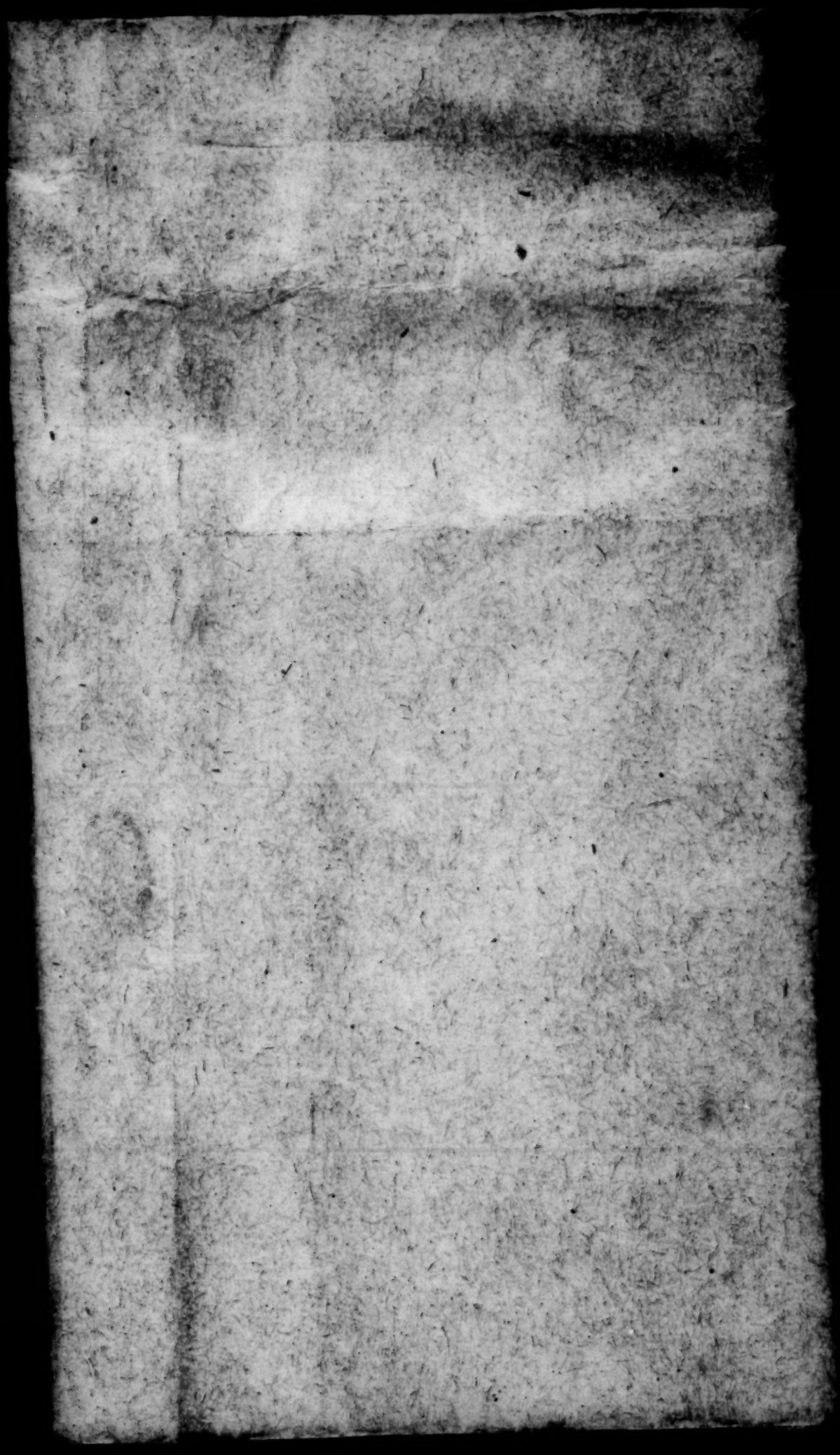
To prevent foreſtalling, &c. they might, firſt, be accurately defined by law. Then, all contracts, at preſent exiſting, as well as thoſe hereafter entered into, for ſuch purchaſes, might be rendered null and void. And, effectually to deſtroy *all confidence* between the parties, they might be made ſubject to ſevere damages, as well as impriſonment;—for inſtance, were A——, *after* the law had paſſed, to agree to purchaſe the produce of the dairy of B——, or his crop of corn, for 1801, for 400*l.* the agreement ſhould not only be void, but B—— ſhould be enabled, in a court of law, within a given period, to recover 800*l.* and coſts, of A——, half to go to himſelf, the other half to the King. Thus, no man who made an *unfair* bargain, could ever feel himſelf ſafe. A ſevere penalty might attach to the regrater, alſo; and, were foreſtalling once conquered, and commodities ſold in the *open* market, the monopolizer muſt, with great difficulty, effect his purpoſe, in *detail*; he would be reduced to his proper ſtation: his dealings expoſed to view, his paper ſupplies cut off, and a ſtrong competition in the market, the monopolizer would be a tractable and uſeful member of ſociety!

A free inland trade, meaning a trade free from the interruption of force, or of duties, particularly as far as may relate to corn, ſeems eſſential; but, ſurely, cannot include the freedom of foreſtalling. Nothing could

could be more impolitic than to paſs a law, that every quarter of wheat, for inſtance, raiſed in Berkſhire, ſhould be, there, conſumed; or, a ſurplus in one county, could not ſupply a deficiency, in another, or the demands of the metropolis; yet, ſurely, one to compel the farmer to ſell, by *bulk*, in the open market, while it ſecured the intereſt of the conſumer, would not injure the fair profits of the farmer, or a free communication through the country at large.

If the dealer in corn wiſhes to make a purchaſe, it appears but politic that he ſhould do it in the open market: but, every thing which relates to the *corn* trade is a delicate ſubject, indeed! and muſt be left to delicate hands to touch. The moſt able, enlightened, and patriotic part of the nation, will ſoon diſcuſs it; and, it is to be hoped, as the evils of ſcarcity are among the greateſt with which God or man can afflict a nation, ſo the remedies to be applied will be the wiſeſt which a nation can adopt.

October 21, 1800.

THE END.

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